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that he had a variety of petitions to present from the Catholics and Protestants of various parts of Ireland. For the information of the House he should move that one of them be read, as they were all the same. They were against a society called the Orange Lodge. He had had them in his possession some time with an intention to present them; but he had come down to the House several days without finding any of the Ministers present, and had thought it improper to lay them on the table in their absence. He had waited, therefore, for a Meeting like the present; but he did not mean, as there was an interesting subject which already stood for that evening's discussion, to press the matter upon the attention of the House. He thought it his duty, however, to present the petitions, because he conceived that when other Societies were being put down, when the Catholic Board (upon whose proceedings he should deliver no opinion) was laid aside, and when it was known that elsewhere a Bill had been introduced for preserving the peace of Ireland, the moment was come for Government itself to take some measure with respect to the associations referred to in those Petitions. If he should learn from the sentiments of Ministers, that it was their intention to suppress the system, then he should think it unnecessary to make any ulterior motion; but if not, he should bring the question before their Lordships. He could not, however, dismiss the subject without begging that one of the petitions might be read. The substance of the allegations contained in them was, that these societies were bound together by secret and illegal oaths (illegal because conditional,) that they formed processions in which there were a number of armed people, armed societies being unconstitutional, and that the existence of these lodges gave rise to other societies of a different nature, but equally distressing to the country. One of the petitions was then read. It and several others from different districts in Ireland, were ordered to lie on the table.

ORANGE SOCIETIES.

The subsequent debate took place in the House of Commons on the 15th inst. in a committee on the Irish Seditious Meetings Bill. Notes are added to illustrate the subject.

Sir Henry Parnell* rose to call the attention of the committee to the bill, as one of the greatest importance, under the present circumstances of Ireland. He had not opposed the Speaker's leaving the chair, because he believed that some legislative measure was necessary to restore the peace of that country; but in respect to the bill, the only part which he could approve of was the preamble, which stated this necessity to exist. The various enactments of it were not, in his opinion, either justifiable by any sound principle of legislation, or by the state of things in Ireland. For this reason, he was sorry a committee had not been appointed to examine into the question, as the result must have been a very different proceeding from that they were now called on to agree to. By the assistance of such an inquiry, the committee would have been able to understand exactly what was the state of Ireland, which they could not do from the information given to it by the Right Hon. Secretary. Though he had mentioned a great many outrages, and proved a considerable extent of disturbance to prevail, he had not explained the system on which the several illegal associations which existed in Ireland were formed, their various ways of extending themselves, or the objects they had in view; neither had he told the House, how many there were of these Associations. The Right Hon. Gentleman has described the Thrashers, Carders and Caravats, which infest the central parts of the Country, but he has said nothing of the continual disturbance of the peace, the riots, battles and loss of lives which are almost daily occurring in the Province of Ulster, or of the Association of Orangemen, to which this state of the North is to be attributed. In speaking of the Orangemen, it was necessary to draw a distinction between those who were called so because they were Protestants who were hostile to Catholic emancipation, and those who were associated in Lodges, and by a secret Oath for the purpose, as they hold out, of maintaining the Protestant Ascendancy; the former

* Sir Henry Parnell, in a letter to, the person who undertook the management of the petitions, observes, "The lateness of the hour has been the cause of the very brief report of what passed, which has appeared in the Newspapers."

did no more than exercise that freedom of opinion which every one was entitled to enjoy, and were a body of men very conspicuous for their loyalty, and high independent principles;* the latter though equally loyal, were influenced by the strongest feelings of persecution in all their thoughts and actions, in regard to their Catholic countrymen. They were organized under a most perfect system of secret association. Their lodges were governed by masters and committees, secretaries, and treasurers. A certain number of masters of lodges, elected masters of districts; these masters of districts, elected masters of counties and cities, and these formed the Grand Lodge, whose authority every Orangeman was sworn to obey. Each Orangeman paid annually a sum of money to a general fund; and on admission, took an oath, binding himself to obey the rules and orders of the Grand Lodge, and not to divulge the secret rules of the association. By their processions on certain days in each year, their resolutions at their meetings, and their general conduct towards the Catholics, they provoked a constant effort on their part to vengeance and retaliation, and thus it happened that, without being the actual aggressors, a large meeting of the people, on public occasions, hardly ever took place in the North of Ireland, without a desperate battle ensuing, and the loss of many lives. This being unquestionably the state of the North of Ireland, it became the Right Hon. Gentleman to bring it under the notice of the House, when he called upon it to adopt a measure for preserving the peace of Ireland; he should have proved himself an impartial public servant, and ready to suppress illegal associations of all kinds, whether he found them in the South as Caravats or in the North as Orangemen. It might not, perhaps, have been necessary for him to introduce any particular clause in his Bill directly applicable to this association, because the law as it now stands is sufficient to enable

the executive government to proceed against it; but he should at least have spoken of it in such terms as would have left it beyond all doubt, that the Irish government would prefer enforcing the laws with strict impartiality, to giving countenance to a system, which was destructive of the public peace and subversive of all law. It was the more necessary that he should have taken this course, in consequence of the failure of the declared sentiments of this House in the last Session to discourage it. The Noble Lord opposite (Castlereagh) had scarcely declared that the government would enforce the laws against this association, when a meeting of the Grand Lodge was held in Dublin on the 12th of July, and a counter declaration was published calling upon all Orangemen to persevere, and not to submit to the attempts that were made to put them down. On the very day on which this declaration was published in Dublin, a riot took place in Belfast, originating in a procession of Orangemen, in which three persons were killed. In the course of the year, various other riots had occurred at Kilkeel, at Shercock and other places; and no less than twenty or thirty lives were lost in these several affrays.

Under these circumstances, it was not too much to require from his Majesty's Ministers, on this occasion, to renew the declaration which was made in the last Session, and to pledge themselves to act upon it, and restore the peace of the Province of Ulster. But this association of Orangemen was the cause of still greater evil than that already described; it had led to the formation of a counter association of persons calling themselves Ribbonmen. This was planned exactly upon the same principles of Lodges, and had secret oaths, and it appears to have consisted of 20,000 persons, according to a statement of Mr. O'Connell in the month of June of last year. If then, the Right Hon. Gentleman had given an accurate statement to the House of the extent to which the system of illegal association was carried on in Ireland, he would have shown that there were no less than five different bodies, each of them organized by secret oaths, and un-

* With all due submission to Sir Henry, his idea on this point, may be pronounced erroneous. None can with precision be denominated Orangemen, who have not taken the secret oath, or marched in their hostile ranks, with the insignia of their order, how much soever their private sentiments may lean to the Orange system.

† Two only were killed in Belfast, but several were badly wounded, one of whom suffered amputation of his leg.

der a distinct plan of government, in the whole, covering a great portion of the kingdom, and keeping it a state of continual disturbance. As a remedy for this evil, he calls upon the house to adopt a measure, which is to enable the magistrates, at Sessions, to transport all persons found out of their houses between sun-set and sun rise, and without a trial by Jury! Whereas, instead of a measure so unconstitutional, and so very liable to be abused, and to be attended with great vexation and cruelty, he ought to have proposed one which should have been consistent with the ordinary usage of the Constitution, and directly calculated to punish with facility and certainty all those various offences which particularly distinguish the character of these several illegal associations which have usurped the dominion of the country, and supplanted the laws of the land. In order to obtain such measure in place of that which is proposed, the Right Hon. Baronet said, he should move to leave out the words in the 7th clause, "without any Grand Jury, and without any bill found, and without the verdict of any Petit Jury." He said he had heard no good reason urged to shew the necessity of laying aside the trial by Jury; that in respect to the county he represented, he was sure the Juries would discharge their duty without being influenced by any fear of injury for so doing; and if it should be otherwise in other counties, a remedy might easily be found, in moving the place of trial to some neighbouring county.

Mr. Peel said, after noticing some of the objections made by Sir H. Parnell to the bill under consideration, that he felt himself called upon to advert to that part of his speech which related to certain associations, existing particularly in the North of Ireland, called Orange Societies. He did not rise as the advocate for these Societies. It was no part of his duty to defend them, but when they, or any other of his Majesty's subjects, were unfairly aspersed, it was but an act of justice to vindicate them from any charges which were not founded. These societies had existed in Ireland, he believed, since the year 1795, and had always been peculiarly obnoxious and objects of marked hostility to the factious and disloyal. He was far from saying that none but the factious and disloyal objected to them; and he believed many loyal, moderate and sensible persons used their influence in discouraging such and

similar associations, and disapproved them, as tending to create irritation, and to extend and exasperate party feelings* but he would again repeat that from the loyal principles which they professed, and their firm and determined enmity to the views of the factious and disloyal,† to that class of persons they were peculiarly offensive and obnoxious. Their principles and their proceedings had therefore been at various times grossly misrepresented. In the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Commons, in year 1798, the arts that were used to make the Orange associations the means of exciting in the breasts of the lower class of Catholics, the most malignant and vindictive passions, were particularly noticed‡. Fabricated rules, professing to be rules of Orangemen were circulated. The lower order of Catholics were instructed to believe, that one of these rules bound their society, "to be ready at a moment's warning to burn all the Roman Catholic chapels, not to wear Irish manufactures, or to give employment to any Papist." He could not consider that the Hon. Baronet's notice of the Orange Societies of Ireland was introduced under very flattering auspices. It appeared to have originated with a certain assembly called the Catholic Board, and he read an extract from the reported proceedings of that august body, Dennis Scully, esq. in the chair, from which it appeared, that Sir Henry Parnell had written to Mr. Hay,

* A very large concession truly!

† So then the Orangemen are to be excused for their illegal acts, by a whining supplicating plea of loyalty! The petitions state with much truth, "To be truly loyal, is to be strictly obedient to the laws." This factitious and fictitious loyalty is like charity "to cover a multitude of sins."

‡ Another part of the Report of the Committee in 1798 might have been noticed with equal propriety. Dr. McNevin declared in his examination that the forming of Orange Societies in any part of the country served to recruit the ranks of the United Irishmen in that district. So much for their boasted preservation of the peace. Statesmen should take warning. Ribbonmen and Threshers are now increased in the same manner. All the disturbances in Ulster may be traced to the Orange system as the exciting cause.

assuring him that he would bring the Orange Societies under consideration of Parliament. This letter was, by rather a strange coincidence, dated the 12th of July, 1813, and notwithstanding all the mischief which the Hon. Baronet attributed to them, all the irritation of which he supposed them to be the cause, it appeared, that the Hon. Baronet said nothing upon the subject, until the 15th of July 1814, three days after that which was the anniversary of these societies, and on which, if any irritation was excited, it was most likely to arise. One word about the petitions, which the Honourable Baronet had presented against the Orange Societies, of which he had boasted as being most numerous and respectably signed, and as expressing the opinion, not of the Catholics, but of Protestants, Presbyterians, and Catholics indiscriminately; here again it was but common justice that truth should be told, and that the House should not be imposed upon. When the Protestants of Dublin had presented a petition against concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics, the signatures to it were very rigorously examined; some forgeries were said to be discovered, and every attempt was made to throw odium upon those from whom the petition proceeded. It will not be unjust, therefore to inquire a little into petitions of an opposite tendency. He held in his hand a petition, which professed to come from the Protestants and Catholics of Newry; which expressed great abhorrence of Orangemen, and which was stated to be most numerous and respectably signed, that it was most numerous signed he could not deny, but he was not surprised at it, for one individual had felt such virtuous resentment against the Orangemen, that, in his own hand-writing, he had affixed 98 signatures to the petition. Any person that would examine it, would see the last 98 names were evidently written in the same hand. As for the Pro-

testants, he had shewn the petition to the representative of Newry Gen. Needham) who could not recognize a Protestant amongst the subscribers, and although the name of "Patrick Duigenan" appeared more than once among the signatures, he rather suspected it was signed by proxy.†

He had said thus much, because he thought it was but common justice to any class of his Majesty's subjects, be they who they may, to vindicate them at least, from unjust imputations. As for the Orange Societies of Ireland, he would rather speak of the individuals, who composed the association, than of the association itself. *He was no great friend to any associations in any way of a political character, which were not under the controul of Government.* He believed the individuals who composed the Orange Societies, were generally speaking, as brave and as high-spirited, and as loyal a class of men as any

† No blame attaches to the Catholics of Newry, whatever may belong to the Protestants of that town, because none of the latter joined in so reasonable a petition. When the heading was prefixed, according to the formula of other petitions, of which this one formed a link, it might reasonably have been expected, that some Protestants would have affixed their signatures. It is acknowledged that many of the names at the close of the petition are in the hand-writing of one person. This error in point of form was noticed previously to the petitions being forwarded, and an explanation was given, that delay attending from some of the poorer classes affixing their signatures, a young man added the names of those who requested. On examining the record of the names which has been preserved, the name of Patrick Duigenan does not appear. The signature "Paddy Duigenan" is on record; but surely the Doctor, although raised to be a Privy Counsellor, has not obtained exclusive authority for the use of that name which he has raised to so great celebrity. It is no uncommon circumstance to see two persons of the same name. These trifling objections showed how low the Secretary was forced to descend for want of better. He leaves the other petitions untouched; thus affording a proof of their correctness in standing the test of his minute inspection.

* The petitions did not originate with the Catholic Board, which, notwithstanding the minister's sneer, may be pronounced *truly respectable*. They had requested Sir Henry Parnell to make a motion for inquiry in last session. The Petitions as presented to parliament in the present session, originated in the bloody sequel which attended the procession in Belfast on their anniversary of last year.

in his Majesty's dominions, that they might be safely depended upon in any hour of emergency, for the defence of their country, from the danger of external attack, or internal disorder. But they should recollect that it was only as individuals their services could be available to the state; that the government could recognize no independent associations for the support of the constitution, or any other political object, and that the more that that loyalty and courage, which he admitted and admired, were placed under the controul and superintendence of government, and under that alone; the more effectual would they be in the support of the constitution, and in the preservation of the public peace. He thought it hardly necessary to vindicate the government from that most unfounded charge, that justice was not impartially administered to all classes of his Majesty's subjects. If the peace was broken, if excesses were committed, the government never had, and never would make a discrimination between the offending parties on account of their religion; they never had, and never would inquire, in bringing them to trial, in punishing, or in pardoning, whether they were Protestants or Catholics. If the injured party could not afford the expence of prosecution, the government would undertake it at the public charge, and would see that the ends of public justice were not defeated;* there is no merit in this; in stating it he was only repelling false and unmerited accusations, and not claiming any credit for the government. He thought the less subjects of this delicate nature were brought under discussion, the better. According to the speech of the Hon. Bart. it appeared evident that his ground of

complaint is not on the oath taken by Orangemen, but in the public demonstration of certain feelings, and in the commemoration of events of which the memory is justly dear to them. The Hon. Baronet might succeed in making the oath of Orangemen, or any other oath, unlawful, but can he hope to succeed in preventing by any law, those processions, or those public exhibitions to which he refers; and to which, and not to the oaths, he attributes the irritation that he says prevails? How can he hope to make it an offence against law, to walk in procession on the 12th of July, or to wear Orange Lillies, or to drink the glorious memory of King William? He might as well attempt to expunge the 12th of July from the Calendar.† It would be very absurd, and in his mind, very unwise, to attempt any such interference; while he said that he thought such interference would be very unwise, that it would be

† Is it no crime, by insulting processions, and the exhibition of party badges, to stir up animosities, which distract the country, and lead to dreadful breaches of the peace? What would the Secretary say to societies parading with the national green? Would he find no means to repress them? The plain honest line of conduct is, to suppress all demonstrations of party with an even hand. So only can peace be effectually restored. If the act of the 15th and 16th of Geo. III. were impartially put in force against Orangemen by the law officers of government, armed by the peculiar advantages they possess, Ribbonmen and Thrashers would soon disappear. This act was passed in 1775-6, and is called "An act to prevent and punish tumultuous risings of persons within this kingdom." In the 2d section it provides that "if any persons, being armed with any weapons whatsoever, or disguised in any manner whatsoever, or wearing any particular badge, dress, or uniform not usually worn by them upon their lawful occasions, or assuming any particular name or denomination not usually assumed by his majesty's subjects on their lawful occasions, should rise, assemble, or appear by day or by night, to the terror of his Majesty's subjects, every person so offending shall be guilty of an high misdemeanor, punishable by fine, imprisonment, &c. &c."

* There is an essential distinction between an official and an effective prosecution. At the Summer Assizes at Monaghan last year, the Counsellors *really* employed in the prosecution of Orangemen, had a more difficult task to guard against the coadjutors forced on them as conductors of a government prosecution, than against the directly opposing counsel employed in the defence. Would Morgan and M^r. Allen have been convicted even of manslaughter for their deeds in Belfast, if they had been left to the care of a government prosecution?

very absurd to prevent loyal men from commemorating events to which they owe their liberty and the blessings they enjoy, he would also say, that nothing can be more strongly the wish of the government of Ireland, than that that commemoration should be conducted without insult or just cause of irritation to others. He said just cause, for he believed that there are many persons in Ireland of that peculiar sensibility, that take offence without cause;* but he was sure, that no loyal man or body of men, can give a greater proof of their loyalty, than not only by a strict obedience to the laws, but even by shewing deference to the feelings of others, where it can be shewn without any compromise of principle, and where the consequences are favourable to the harmony of society and the preservation of the public peace.

Sir Henry Parnell spoke as follows†—“What has fallen from the Right Hon. Gentleman, rendered it necessary for me to trouble the committee a second time. The Right Hon. Gentleman has stated, that the petitions which have been presented against the Orange Associations, were the wish of the Catholic Board, and has preferred a charge against me, for being the organ of that Board. The Catholic Board did certainly apply to me to bring the conduct of the Orange Societies under the consideration of the House, and I willingly consented to do so, because this Board was virtually the Representative Body of the whole Catholic population; and because I knew the grievance complained of was one which called for investigation and relief. In complying with their request, I did no more than what is

the duty of every member of Parliament to do when called upon, by any great portion of the Constituent Body, to advocate their cause against injustice and persecution. I did no more than what had so frequently been done by the Right Hon. Gentleman, the member for Dublin, when he has proposed motions to the House in favour of Catholic Emancipation. So far from feeling myself exposed to censure, I tell the Right Hon. Gentleman, that, if that Board was existing, I would readily comply with any other application they might make to me, similar to that which they made last year. But the Right Hon. Gentleman has not only attempted to take away from the weight of my observations upon the Orange Association, by endeavouring to connect them with the Catholic Board, but from the credit of the Petitions against it, which I have presented this session, by saying that they were the Petitions of this Board. This fact I positively deny—they are the Petitions of a great number of the most respectable inhabitants of the principal towns in the Province of Ulster, and owe their origin to the distracted state of society in that province, and not to the advice or exertions of the Catholic Board.

In respect to the attempt of the Rt. Hon. Gentleman to diminish the credit of these petitions by his statement, that no Protestant of the town of Newry has signed them, and that in one petition several names appear to be in the same hand writing, the Committee, I hope, will feel, that these petitions should be judged upon only according to the truth of the allegations that are contained in them. To these allegations the Right Hon. Gentleman has made no reply: he could not do so, because he knows they are true, and that every thing that appears in them can be, if necessary, supported by evidence. In regard to the origin of the Orange Societies, and of the cause of the hostility that exists between them and the Catholics, a history of which the Right Hon. Gentleman has been pleased to give the Committee, I have no hesitation in saying, it is incorrect. On this point there is evidence which places the matter beyond all dispute; the address of Lord Gosford to the Magistrates of the county of Armagh in the year 1795. He says. “It is no secret, that a persecution, accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty, which have, in all ages, distinguished that

* So one party, though insulted, must not take offence, although the other have in many instances marked their retaliation for small injuries by the destruction of their opponents. Let the scenes of North-street in Belfast on the 12th of July, last year, bear witness. Is this equal justice, or equal protection?

† The editor of the Belfast News-letter gives continued proofs of his gross partiality. In reporting this debate, he affords a very slight sketch of Sir Henry Parnell's first speech, and takes no notice whatever of the second. The editor of the Chronicle impartially communicates to his readers a full detail of both, and also of that of the Irish Secretary.

dreadful calamity, is now raging in this country. Neither age, nor even acknowledged innocence as to the late disturbances, is sufficient to excite mercy, much less afford protection. The only crime which the wretched objects of this merciless persecution are charged with, is a crime of easy proof; it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this species of delinquency; and the sentence they pronounce is equally concise and terrible: it is nothing less than confiscation of all property, and immediate banishment."

This is the recorded history of the first Orangemen, in the words of one of the most upright and respectable men that ever lived, and they fully prove that the original of the hostility between Catholics and Orangemen, is not, as it has been said by the Right Hon. Gentleman, the treason of Catholics and the loyalty of Orangemen, but a principle of persecution more violent and more dreadful than ever existed in any other country. I do not, by any means impute to the Orangemen of the present day the same excessive spirit of persecution; I consider them as a very different order of men, and I am willing to allow them all the merit they assume for loyalty to the king and attachment to the constitution. I am also ready to allow, that in most of the recent riots which have taken place, they have not been the aggressors;† and that what is blameable in their conduct, is owing more to a mistaken view of what is their duty as loyal subjects and good citizens, than to any innate or cruel disposition to injure and destroy their Catholic fellow countrymen. I have no desire to see the government adopt any harsh or vindictive measures in attempting to suppress their association; all I wish, and think necessary for government to do, is, to have it distinctly understood that they consider the

association illegal, and that they will take measures to prevent the laws from being violated, without prejudice or partiality to any description of persons. This, I trust, will yet be done, as the Right Hon. Gentleman certainly deserves credit for the latter part of his speech, whatever may have been the errors that distinguished the beginning of it; wherein he said that he would not encourage the association, that he would use his utmost endeavours to controul it, and that every step should be taken on the part of government, to prevent irritation, and the recurrence of those scenes which have repeatedly disgraced the north of Ireland in the course of the last year.

RESOLUTIONS OF A MEETING IN LIVERPOOL ON THE SLAVE-TRADE.

At a respectable meeting held this day, the 19th July, in the Town-hall,

The Worshipful the Mayor in the Chair,
the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That after the great and disinterested example set by Great Britain in abolishing the trade for Slaves to the coast of Africa, we had hoped to see effectual measures taken by his Majesty's Ministers to induce other countries to relinquish the same: and had anxiously looked forwards to a general pacification of Europe as the period that could not fail to terminate this traffic throughout the civilized world.

That the obligations arising out of the law of nations apply to the States of Africa as they apply to other States, and that the people of Africa (regarded as free persons) ought to be protected in improving their own condition, and in cultivating a peaceful intercourse with the people of other nations.

That it is, therefore, with grief and astonishment that we perceive in the Treaty of Peace lately concluded between this country and France, an additional article, by which it appears that Great Britain has virtually consented that France may revive and carry on such trade for five years, although it is in the same article admitted that such trade is repugnant to the principles of natural justice, and of the enlightened age in which we live.

That with all due deference to the characters of those by whom such Treaty was concluded, this meeting cannot but con-

* They are still lineal descendants in principles and practices of the Peep-of-day-boys, according to the different transformations of Royal Boyne Association, and Orangemen. "Idem et alter" "Another, and yet the same," may serve as their motto.

† Orangemen, it may be admitted, have not always been the first aggressors, yet often they were the first even in fact of assault, but always in intention of insult.